

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and the activities of terrorist organizations sponsored by that regime in Latin America, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 435

Whereas the Department of State has said that Iran is the “most active state sponsor of terrorism”;

Whereas the Department of State 2007 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report moved Iran to a “Jurisdiction of Primary Concern”;

Whereas in February 2006, the chairman of the Iranian legislative body announced an offer to assist Venezuela with a nuclear program;

Whereas in February 2006, Cuba, Venezuela, and Syria were the only 3 member nations of the 35-nation board of the International Atomic Energy Agency to vote against referring Iran to the United Nations Security Council for its nuclear program;

Whereas in September 2007, Iran requested observer-status membership in the Bolivarian Alternative for the Peoples of the Americas (ALBA), an organization led by Hugo Chavez, President of Venezuela, to counter United States-led efforts for free trade in that region;

Whereas in September 2007, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the President of Iran, made his third visit in one year to Latin America, this time visiting Venezuela and Bolivia, where Mr. Ahmadinejad announced a commitment of Iranian investment in Bolivia of up to \$1,000,000,000 over five years;

Whereas Mr. Ahmadinejad and Mr. Chavez have announced plans for a \$2,000,000,000 shared fund to invest in projects in countries that Mr. Chavez characterized as seeking to “liberate themselves from the U.S. imperialist yoke”;

Whereas in July 2007, the Venezuelan energy minister announced plans to sell gasoline to Iran following riots in Iran opposing the Iranian Government’s policy of gas rationing;

Whereas in March, 2007 routine civilian airline flights were established from Tehran, Iran directly to Caracas, Venezuela;

Whereas the 2006 State Department’s Country Reports on Terrorism stated that Venezuela is not “fully cooperating” with United States antiterrorism efforts;

Whereas according to the State Department, “an individual claiming to be a member of an Islamic extremist group in Venezuela placed two pipe bombs outside the American Embassy in Caracas on October 23, 2006. Venezuelan police safely disposed of the two pipe bombs and immediately made one arrest. The investigation by Venezuelan authorities resulted in the additional arrest of the alleged ideological leader of the group. At year’s end, both suspects remained in jail and prosecutors were pressing terrorism charges against them”;

Whereas Hizbollah, Iran’s proxy terrorist group, executed the deadliest terrorist attack against Americans abroad since World War II, the 1983 suicide bombing of a United States Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, that killed 241 American servicemen;

Whereas Iran and Hizbollah were involved in the two deadliest terrorist attacks in Argentina: the March 1992 bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina, which killed 29 people and the July 1994 attack against the Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association (AMIA), which killed 85 people;

Whereas the Government of Argentina is currently seeking legal action against the

perpetrators of the 1994 AMIA terrorist attack;

Whereas in September 2007, the President of Argentina said to the United Nations General Assembly, “I want to stress here, in the United Nations headquarters, that unfortunately until now, the Islamic Republic of Iran has not collaborated with the Argentine justice system to clarify what occurred”;

Whereas according to a 2003 report by the Library of Congress, money laundered in the tri-border region, the area where Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil meet, “probably are in the billions of dollars per year” and “Hizbollah has reaped hundreds of millions of dollars in profits from narcotics and arms trafficking, product piracy, and other illicit activities in the tri-border area”;

Whereas the television station Telemundo interviewed residents of the tri-border region who said that “they’re only waiting for an order to put bombs on their body and attack the United States”;

Whereas in March 2007, Brazilian officials arrested 31 people for illegally issuing passports over the past 14 years, and press reports indicate that some of these passports may have been provided to members of terrorist organizations, including members of Hizbollah;

Whereas Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and the United States have formed the 3+1 Group, which has focused on the financing of terrorism, drug and arms trafficking, and border security, as well as the exchange of information, with the purpose of preventing terrorism and transnational crimes in the tri-border region;

Whereas in November 2006, Brazil established a new Regional Intelligence Center in the tri-border region, dedicated to coordinating intelligence activities of the police forces of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, and invited Argentina and Paraguay to send official representatives to the Center;

Whereas in March 2007, the Organization of American States’ Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE) reaffirmed that “terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, whatever its origin or motivation, has no justification whatsoever, affects the full enjoyment and exercise of human rights, and constitutes a grave threat to international peace and security, democratic institutions, and the values enshrined in the OAS Charter, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, and other regional and international instruments”;

Whereas in July 2007, the Government of Argentina enacted anti-terrorism legislation that put in place harsher penalties for cooperating with terrorists; and

Whereas as of March 2007, the Government of Brazil was considering expanded anti-terrorism legislation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses concern over the emerging national security implications of the Iranian regime’s efforts to expand its influence in Latin America;

(2) supports the existing counterterrorism efforts of Latin American countries, including the successful counterterrorism efforts of the 3+1 Group (consisting of Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and the United States);

(3) emphasizes the importance of eliminating Hizbollah’s financial network in the tri-border region of South America where Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina meet and throughout the Western Hemisphere;

(4) commends and supports the efforts of individual countries and regional bodies in the Western Hemisphere that have led efforts to eliminate terrorist financing and other terrorist operations;

(5) calls on the United States Government to work with governments in the Western

Hemisphere to pursue an antiterrorism campaign based on cooperation and constant vigilance;

(6) urges the United States Government to work bilaterally and multilaterally with countries in the Western Hemisphere to help them create antiterrorism legislation that would give governmental authorities new tools to take action against terrorist networks; and

(7) recommends that the President of the United States create more mechanisms for joint counterterrorism operations and intraregional information sharing among supportive countries in the Western Hemisphere, especially in light of Iran’s increased involvement in the region.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

□ 1445

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I want to thank the gentlemen from Florida, Mr. KLEIN and Mr. MACK, both active and valued members of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, which I chair, for their work on this timely and important resolution that raises awareness about Iran’s growing foothold in the Western Hemisphere and its national security implications for all countries of this region.

This resolution is particularly valuable as it catalogues a series of facts and actions related to the growing presence of Iran south of our border.

Last month, immediately after his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Iranian President Ahmadinejad flew to Venezuela and Bolivia. This was his third trip the region this year. Mr. Ahmadinejad has used these trips to announce increased diplomatic cooperation and multilateral agreements on energy and industry.

Iranian involvement, Mr. Speaker, in Latin America is not new, as we all know. In 1994, Iran and its proxy terrorist group, Hezbollah, were involved in planning the bombing of the AMIA Jewish Cultural Center in Buenos Aires, where 85 people lost their lives in the bombing.

In fact, just last week I met with the U.S. Ambassador to Argentina, who updated me on Argentina’s progress on the AMIA bombings.

Hezbollah remains operational in parts of Latin America, and they continue to fundraise for their global operations.